

7/14/72

Dick, I begin this in haste on the chance I can complete it before my wife is ready. We are later for an appointment now.

Unfortunately, your presumptions, the ones on which I would almost have staked my life, are as totally wrong as they are reasonable. There is no possibility of doubt for there are what amount to confessions. I don't know how wide distribution Gary has made of his evasive, self-serving and incomplete, thereby additionally dishonest response, but I venture to say he has not distributed my letters to him, esp. the response to the one he sent you. I have made no distribution except to HR, who is involved. He has written me but one. I responded. He is silent. Except for sending the self-serving one to whomever he may imagine I have sent anything, even though I told him I was making no distribution.

I have been through much of this. There is initial disappointment and anger, but it wears off. In this case he has passed, but it will not, I fear, wear off, such was my affection for both. Particularly Gary.

I am not disposed to take much time on this. I have taken an enormous amount, but except in a few cases, all in an effort to help Howard preserve his equanimity and balance as he tries to preserve his integrity. To that I have devoted a length close to a short book, as in the end he will tell you. I have kept telling him right and wrong are uncertainties, but what is in the mind need not be, that if he can't be sure that whatever he does or does not do at any time is right, the thing to strive for is certainty in the mind that at the time of decision he has been as honest with himself as is possible. There is more to this than you can know, and the pressures on him by Sylvia have been astronomical and as I have not told him, outrageous. If he can separate himself from emotion, he'll be ok, for his thinking is pretty clear and rapidly clarifying more. I think he has now come to understand that it is immaterial to me what he does, as long as he does what he then thinks is right. And I think he has also come to understand that the only one who need be concerned about his decision is Howard. Decision may be an indefinite area with you, for I don't know how much you have been told. As you can see, I am steering away from it. I did but two things with you: tell you I had broken off with the two and that Howard might need help and I'd told him to seek it from you if he could not get it at home. I am involved, so he may feel my advice is not dispassionate. And as best a man can, as I think he will tell you, I sought to avoid arguing a point of view while answering his questions.

I think it best that when you find out what has really happened it be best if you do from him. He has advantages I do not have in that he suffered the disadvantages of Jerry and Sylvia really pressuring him. While I am the one who can be hurt, and I think the effect may well be the opposite in some respects, if I can ever find any time, he will tell you that I haven't pressured him in any way and have strongly encouraged him to do what he knows I oppose if he considers it right.

Because there is the chance you may get involved through him or your own misplaced dedication (and it will be if you do get involved in anything more than counselling Howard), I tell you what otherwise I would not and expect you to keep it entirely to yourself. Sylvia has been on amphetamines for 20 years, lost her source in all of this, and cracked up in a way. She says she is better now. I did not even tell him until he disclosed in confidence that he knew, not knowing that she had told me NOT in confidence. I told him to keep it that way because it could be misinterpreted to hurt her. She says they were prescribed. She really lost herself in pushing him to the extreme. In the course of all of this I think he has gotten better than a couple of years in college, but it has to have been very rough on him. He is, as we forget because he is so very bright, but 19, and a cloistered 19 at that. It is now becoming clear that everyone is pissed off at and has the deepest doubts about Wecht and his real purposes. You also know nothing of this unless you get it separately.

Now, on Gary, he got that from me in confidence, as he got everything I got and admits, quite some time ago. He claims to legitimacy in duplicating my work by asking the Archives for a different copy. But even the knowledge that it was at the Archives he got from me in two ways: in the covering letter with which it was sent FOR me, BY NAME, and in the list, which I sent him as soon as I could copy it after getting it about 3/12/70 as I now recall. So, it was not only impossible for him to get it independently, but the one of the two sources he claims to have used he also got from me in confidence. He seems to

have forgotten the second source he could have cited, but he did get both from me under accepted limitations.

The wierdest part is that the unconscionable thing he did served no purpose. In those days I trusted Wecht implicitly and never dreamed he was capable of selfishness in this. So, when I got it in my possession, I told him the contents he understands and the others do. But they do not understand the context, as Howard alone does, and he has sent me copies of his letters spelling this out to others. So, the duplicity served no purpose. Jerry dupli cated the duplicity and was here after he did it and pretended he was like my son. For that Lil will never forgive him. Jerry also sent it to Wecht, then told Lifton about it. Jerry told Wecht to consult with Lifton as his "expert", Jerry claims to have gotten it independently from the Archives to some, tells Howard and me he got it from Gary and that he alone gave it to Wecht. It is a miserable business and totally irrelevant to a reading of the capitures and X-rays. It is relevant to separate knowledge. But in any event, I did it at the latest 3/70, so all there were doing is something other than they say they thought. It is particularly reprehensible on Gary's part because of the Ned business and his knowledge of our painful reaction to it. He also knew Ned was being dishonest. He also had the complete book, including this part (Cyril had the earlier two on my initiative but still doesn't begin to understand, incredible as it may seem). So in a variety of ways, in all cases in confidence, he had this from me.

A minor industry has grow up, literary thievery, by those who lust for importance, at least in their own eyes, daydream about being the hero who breaks the case, and fanaticizes over what can be expected of the press. They all invent congenial fictions to make the obvious and inherently incredible acceptable to themselves, and then they "persuade" each other with it. Again, Howard can give you an independent reading. You'll find that I have not exaggerated and that there is worse I haven't gone into.

I started this when we had to leave, resumed on return, and now must quit. Sorry about the tyoing and the mess. Just sit tight and do nothing, for anything will make a bad situation worse. We must keep what options remain open for whatever might eventuate. You an do nothing to help Cyril, you can t undo what these wretched combo has done and kidded itself into being, as Jerry put it, the requirement of "good conscience".

For whatever it means to you, and Howard again is an independent source, not one of these has made specific response to me. I have been specific with each. They pontificate, pretend tolerance and indulgence, but it is shit, as Howard told Jerry as you have never dreamed he could. Then when Kerry pulled the same stuff on him he laid him out all over again. I am staying quiet, doing nothing except responding when they all three demenaed themselves in what they wrote. I didn't even send Howard a copy of Sylvia's letter until he asked it. He has learned much of her. It stinks too much to air. There is more than enough illegitimate complaint about the few who pretend to be critics and sit on their fat asses and do nothing or commercialize and do worse. And it would accomplish nothing.

I commend you for concern ever a friend in need. There is so little today, except for claiming credit for it to make one feel good. Howard has been getting some of this kind of flack. I hope you find you'll have more time when you go there. If you do, remember the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. This is close to the Washington Beltway, hence here. From South Jersey that is closer and faster, save weekends, when it stacks. If you can't and can find time for Howard, I'm sure he will welcome it. Hastily, and thanks for the Vancouver Sym possibility, etc.